

# Handwriting Policy

## OUR SCHOOL VISION

### Barns Green Primary School

Our Values are:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Perseverance
- Compassion
- Community
- Inclusion

Our Vision is:

Promoting independent thought and learning

Providing a broad-based education

Respecting individuality and difference

Emphasising the importance of team work

Nurturing physical health, emotional security and spiritual richness

Our pupils will learn to become self-confident, enthusiastic, resilient and tolerant.

2018

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March 2021

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**Review in**  
July 2024

## Handwriting Policy

### Introduction

*“Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible.”  
(Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association)*

It is our aim to encourage the progression and development of each child’s handwriting throughout the school into a fluent, legible and individual style that can be adapted for a range of purposes and will support their spelling and composition.

### Methodology

At Barns Green we use cursive handwriting as our agreed writing style. This ensures that there is a continuity of handwriting style from Early Years Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage 2.

The British Dyslexia Association recommends that children learn the continuous cursive style. The key advantages are:

- Natural movement
- Correct letter formation
- Less load on memory, aiding movement from left to right
- Clearer spacing
- Increased speed
- The development of a personal style
- Less focus on the mechanics and more on the product of writing
- Improved spelling

### Aims

We aim for children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting
- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
- Automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing
- Use their skills with confidence, in real life situations
- Develop and demonstrate pride in the presentation of their work

### Organisation

Handwriting objectives are taken from the National Curriculum English Programme of Study and form part of the class teachers’ and children’s continuous work. Handwriting is taught in explicit, regular sessions focussing on letter formation and consistent size and shape of letters, as well as accurate joining.

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Alongside discrete teaching we place an emphasis upon handwriting throughout the curriculum. The teaching of handwriting follows the expectations set out in the Programmes of Study. This includes teaching the foundations of cursive handwriting to Reception children, when teachers assess that individuals are ready for this development. Learning is differentiated based on the needs of the child.

### Teaching and Learning

In order to achieve our aims, the following principles are followed:

- The introduction of letters and digraphs is consistent with our 'Read Write Inc' approach to the teaching of early reading
- Patterns relating to letter formations are first introduced using a variety of tools and multi-sensory methods. This develops free flowing hand movements and muscle strength. Letters are also introduced in varied, multi-sensory sessions: writing letters in the air, on backs or hands; orally describing letter shapes and joins with children; using a variety of writing materials including whiteboards, chalk, paints, felt pens, crayons, play dough, cornflour mix, shaving foam etc.
- The cursive font, with lead-ins (see Appendix 1), is taught as a specific skill.
- Additional individual or group practice where necessary.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling.
- As digraphs are introduced, their corresponding joins are taught.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff model appropriate neat handwriting.
- Teachers model cursive script on IWB, whiteboards, flip charts etc.
- Displays around the school and classroom model clear joined handwriting as well as other fonts.
- The cursive font is displayed in classrooms to ensure familiarity with the style.
- Older children, especially those joining the school, will not be expected to adopt the cursive joined style if they already have a fluent, legible handwriting style

### Individual and Group Support

At all stages, teachers are aware of the specific requirements of individuals and will adapt lessons to meet individual needs. Individuals and groups pinpointed as needing further support are given extra time to practise handwriting. Opportunities to continue to develop fine motor skills are planned and provided as appropriate. Teachers also give further support to children who still have not established correct letter formation and this may form a target on a child's Assess Do Review. When marking, teachers offer opportunities to practise specific letters that children are struggling with. Pencil grips and ergonomic pens are provided for children where required.

### Left Handed Writers

Left handed writers can sometimes experience barriers to learning handwriting and partaking in handwriting activities. To ensure our left handed writers can learn and make progress our teachers will support left handed

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children by showing them how and where to sit when writing, and how to position their paper in a way that makes writing easier. When appropriate they will have access to pens and grips designed specifically for left handed writers.

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### Resources and writing materials

Children will begin to write in pencil. When they have achieved handwriting that is both consistently joined and neat they will be awarded their pen licence (usually around Years 3 and 4). They will now be allowed to write in blue pen. At this point, children will be encouraged to write consistently in pen. The school will provide banana pens and handwriting pens for children to use. As they progress through the school those children who write in pen are able to bring in their own blue ink based pen. Children use pencil in their maths books throughout the school. We will provide handwriting books for handwriting practice and SEND resources are available to support those children experiencing difficulties.

### Expectations

#### EYFS

##### Children should be taught to:

- Print and form letters without a lead-in
- Hold a pencil / pen correctly
- Group letters
- Use 'left to right' orientation
- Use exercises to warm and strengthen muscles ready for writing.
- Space letters and words
- Introduction of capital letters
- Begin to write on lines and develop lead-ins when ready.

#### Year 1 (Minimum 3 x 10 minutes sessions per week)

##### Children should be taught to:

- Form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting “families” (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways, descenders and ascenders and to practise
- Leave finger spaces
- Join when ready.

#### Year 2 (Minimum 3 x 10 minute sessions per week)

##### We will build upon the progress made in the previous year children should be taught to:

- Form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters
- Join.

#### Year 3 (Minimum 3 x 15 minute sessions per week)

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### Children should be taught to:

- Develop writing formation so that it sits on the line and begins next to the margin.
- Ensuring consistency of size of writing.
- Develop fluency in joined writing
- By the end of Year 3, most children will use joined handwriting at all times.

### Year 4 (2 x 15 minute sessions per week)

#### Children should be taught to:

- Be aware that at times, other specific forms of writing are required e.g. printing on a map, a fast script for notes.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting e.g. ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

### Year 5 and Year 6 (Minimum 1 x 20 minute sessions per week)

#### Children should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
  - choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
  - choosing the right implement that is best suited for a task.

### Policy Success Criteria

We know Barns Green Primary School's Handwriting Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- A scrutiny of work confirms that the presentation protocol is adhered to.

### Monitoring and Review

The English Lead and school leadership will monitor the impact of this policy on handwriting throughout the school. The Governing Body will monitor the implementation of this policy and its review.

Date  
March 2021

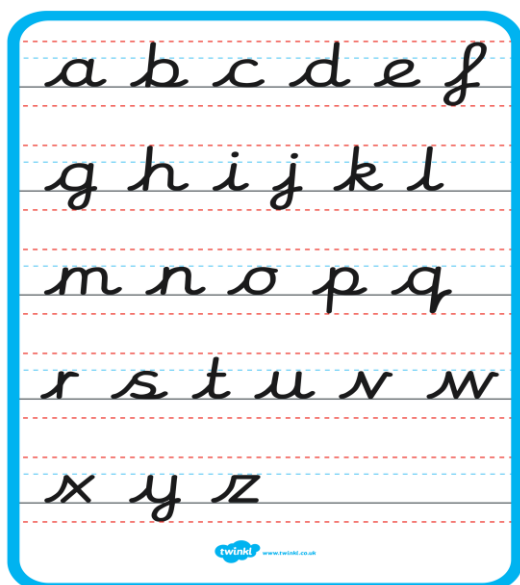
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## Appendix 1

### School Script



## Appendix 2

### Helpful link

<https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/handwriting/help-for-parents/>

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